



Tim Keller, Mayor

Greater Albuquerque Active Transportation Committee (GAATC) – Minutes

Monday, October 18, 2021 | 4:00 – 6:00 PM



Committee Members Present

Richard Meadows (Chair); Dan Jensen; Nevarez Encinias

Committee Members Absent

Raul Chavira; Robin Allen; Lanny Tanning; Josiah Hooten

Staff Members Present

Debbie Bauman (DMD), Tim Brown (DMD), Tara Cok (MRMPO), Julie Luna (Bernalillo County), Hugh Hulse (Parks and Rec), Seth Tinkle (Planning), Carrie Barkhurst (ABQ Ride)

Visitors Present

Aaron Sussman (BHI), Bradyn Hopkins (BHI), Peter Rice (Downtown Albuquerque News), Alejandro Villezcas (Together 4 Brothers), Diego Garcia (Together 4 Brothers), Jamie Jung (Resident)

Richard Meadows called the meeting to order at 4:03 PM.

Approval of September Meeting Agenda

- *No quorum to approve agenda*

Approval of August Meeting Minutes

- *No quorum to approve minutes*

General Announcements / Meeting Format

- No quorum due to insufficient committee members present
- For comments, raise hand and address the chair
- Let presenters finish before questions
- Meeting will be recorded

Public Comments (2-minute limit per audience member)

- No comments

Discussion / Action Items

- **I-25 Montgomery / Comanche Project** – GAATC Resolution and Recommendations
 - Richard Meadows presented a resolution with recommended options, as supported by a majority of GAATC members.
 - I-25 is in the design process to rebuild the interchanges. A unique feature included is the use of Texas Turn-Arounds/U-Turns. For Frontage Rd traffic going north and wanting to go south, the turn-arounds provide U-turn ramps that you can use without crossing the intersection with the rest of traffic. There are concerns about impacts to bike/ped facilities.



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- Various alternatives were presented in September. The Montgomery Blvd interchange goes over the freeway while Comanche Rd goes under the freeway.
- Additional documentation was provided to GAATC members following the meeting.
- Discussion from the August meeting included the fact that it feels unsafe that you have traffic on both sides of you and any way we can protect the bikes/peds and put the space together
- Review of options:
 - Comanche Rd option 1 has a sidewalk and a bike lane on the roadway with the traffic but there are no barriers
 - For Option 2, there is the barrier protecting the area where the combined bike lane and sidewalk form a shared path with jersey barriers on both sides so users are not mixed in with traffic
 - Option 3 on Comanche (not provided for Montgomery), there is a barrier on just one side (facing the general purpose traffic)
- Recommendations to DOT
 - 4 members of the committee that stated they support a resolution Option 2 for both interchanges.
 - Each option includes barriers to protect bikes/peds. The resolution includes additional recommendations for NMDOT.
- Discussion
 - Dan J: In support of the resolution but has concerns over the use of shared-use paths because they perpetuate the idea that bikes/peds should be separated for vehicles and drivers are superior to them. I am assuming there are no plans to extend the bicycle lanes and agree the need to improve access on I-25 and extend bicycle lanes to Renaissance to the west and North Diversion channel to the east and safety measures should be included in any design in the city.
 - Navy E: I agree with what Dan just said. Given the situation on streets like this, separation is warranted. And in general, what is separation doing in the long-term? The resolution as is - I support Option 2 is the best that's there.
 - Jamie J (community member): It seems in the higher traffic areas you have to have those types of barriers to promote people who want to travel to commute and go from park to school. I think all of those proposals are targeting those ideas. I am glad you guys are moving ahead with something like this.
 - Richard M: Since it's a high speed facility going through an interchange, there is no great option available, but we are trying to make it as safe as we can. It would be nice to have more space to work with and with limited space, I think we are doing the best we can.
 - Richard M: GAATC is going to transmit the resolution and email support we received to NMDOT, but we can't formally adopt the resolution.



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- Debbie B: I think the vetting that the committee members have done and the interest they have shared and thought process is really what the state was looking for originally. We will get Aaron (City staff representative) to prepare the email and I will send it and copy you and Aaron. I will make the request that as the design advances, we are going to look for additional opportunities to see how they are progressing. They don't have much yet but don't want them to move ahead and we miss an opportunity. Although we can't formally approve this, the committee is communicating its opinions and recommendations to the project team. That was our goal, so I am grateful for the thought process everyone put into this.

Presentations

- **Bike Gap Closure Analysis – Identification of Low Cost and High Feasibility Projects –**
Aaron Sussman, BHI
 - Ongoing effort to develop a bikeway evaluation process to understand where high priority projects exist across the City and how we can differentiate between them
 - Next step is to identify which projects can be considered as low hanging fruit (low cost and high feasibility). BHI and the City are sharing assessment of first cut of some of these low hanging fruit to be implemented in the near-term at this meeting.
 - Evaluation process overview
 - Objective is to create a flexible tool to use for a variety of bikeway types and with the process to evaluate the benefits and technical feasibility and magnitude of costs
 - Assessed projects from priority gap closure list by GABAC a few years ago (14 corridors) and recommendations from the I-25 Bicycle Accessibility Study
 - Proposal of next steps
 - Purpose is to provide more targeted guidance and way to interpret the scoring
 - Three proposed levels:
 - Proceed with final design: assessment if no additional steps are needed before design
 - Design analysis: type of improvement has been identified but additional steps needed to identify challenges and determine whether technically feasible, come through previous planning and studies but may need public involvement
 - Feasibility study: bikeway improvement type needs to be identified or there are design challenges and potentially alternatives, likely needs public involvement
 - Potential to present updated list to GAATC in December
 - Discussion:
 - Debbie B: Aaron specifically mentioning Rio Grande Blvd corridor, once this list finishes coming together, it is going to require me to take it internally to the City.



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There are multiple projects going on right now that might affect the low-hanging fruit. I think we need to put space into this analysis to put that information in. The Rio Grande Blvd has had a DAR. I think it will be helpful for the committee and where in time things actually are and I wanted to offer that. There are projects that are currently underway that are not included in the analysis that Aaron put together. If you can edit your table that provides a space for me to add current design efforts underway that may or may not be helpful information for the distinction for next steps. I haven't had a chance yet but would like to do that before that list is finalized.

- Richard M: Rio Grande Blvd is a lot closer to happening. I noticed for Alexander Blvd that the design is in progress and would be one that Debbie would say something is happening now.
- Debbie B: we are going to construction in the fall. I need to circle back to provide the information as of what's happening in real-time.
- Richard M: Interest in approving the methodology that BHI is using to evaluate the different projects, but since we can't I would like to hear from committee members here today. Maybe we can tweak the process so when we look at the projects we can consider pedestrian needs alongside the bicycle needs.
 - Debbie M: I am not opposed to that. This started out based on the scope, which is specific to on-street bike lanes. Aaron has reached out to GARTC as well. GAATC focuses on on-street bike facilities. We are not also thinking about pedestrians, but the real effort is on on-street.
 - Richard M: You also have people walking and riding their bikes along the street.
- Richard M: BernCO received a grant to construct Blake Rd so we can take that one off
 - Dan J: I don't think we should take things off the list, we should just note funded. This list also predates us becoming GAATC and goes back to when the committee was focused solely on bicycle related issues. Since this is an older process, we should keep moving forward and start integrating our concerns for other transportation users as we move forward. Having said that, I think that the process is reasonable and makes sense to me. I have no problem with the list that is presented in terms of the feasibility, cost, and impact.
 - Navy E: Nothing else to add. It has been very systematic from the very beginning and agree on how we got here.
- Richard M: We used the equity in the consideration and where these projects are located may not cover the whole Albuquerque area. Do you feel there are ones missing?
 - Jamie J: In terms of quantifying the benefit, you are looking at destinations and would be a good way to see the pedestrian and heat map around the



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areas to connect to. Look at vehicular traffic patterns to understand how people are using the streets. Potential solutions that connect neighborhoods and connects to a larger network.

- Aaron: Yes, we are looking at those things in this evaluation process. I also want to note that this list of projects is only focused on those from the GABAC priority list and most came from the I-25 study. The hope is to be able to use the evaluation process to assess more projects throughout the City.
- Debbie B: Richard, when we first got this federal funding for the I-25 corridor, we tried to make additional requests through the COG process to do this across the other three quadrants. If we are in agreement that this process makes sense and is a way to assess and quantify throughout the other areas, there is an opportunity especially with federal funding coming up – in two years I think. There is an opportunity to get funding to do this in the other quadrants with the same level of analysis and we have covered them all and the communities impacted by bisecting interstates.
- Richard M: When GABAC put the original list together, it was a geographic distribution committee and based them off of where they are at in the community. For I-25, we only looked at the two northern quadrants.
- Debbie B: Now with the committee's new scope, my hope is that it is a tool that gets shared with the active transportation group, complete street committee, and vision zero group. It is helpful we have this other resource when this project comes out of nowhere, we have a place to go to ask what do we know about this and what is missing and provide feedback going into project development instead of just being reactive.
- Richard M: Do you feel like this process will help you next time? I think a year from now where we are proposing new federal projects.
- Debbie B: I do. Whether or not something rises to the top. We have a lot of road projects and the complete streets projects. We aren't focusing the way we might ought to be for the other modes. I think it has multiple purposes.
- Richard M: If those of us on the committee feel good about this project, I would like to state go ahead with using this tool and looking at the different projects and when we have a quorum, we can talk about it some more.

Staff Reports

- Municipal Development (DMD) Debbie Bauman and Tim Brown
 - Working to finalize design analysis reports for Paseo del Norte widening project and Unser widening corridor from Paradise to Rainbow
 - Once released, the City will decide what time periods are appropriate to bring something to the committee



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- 98th and Gibson intersection project is at about 30%; the City may want to come to the committee later this year or early next year
- McMahon project is looking at going to 10% design
- Nothing to report on Vision Zero position but interviews were held and my understanding is that an offer has been made and once official, we will have more information
- Restriped bike lanes on Rio Grande north of I-40
 - Original striping went in and bike lanes ended up 3-3.5'. The City removed existing striping and changed to consistent 5' bike lanes and added chevron markings so bikes don't get clipped.
- Parks and Recreation
 - Nothing to report
- Council Services
 - Nothing to report
- Engineering
 - Nothing to report
- Vision Zero
 - Nothing to report
- Planning (Seth Tinkle)
 - Community planning area assessment process as a tool to provide community needs and offer a path to get there
 - City started with Near Heights and Southwest Mesa reports. The Southwest Mesa will be posted this week (likely Wednesday) and made available for public comment.
 - City Planning will re-evaluate the process and consider things that were successful and potentially bring this to the group at some point
 - Links to websites:
 - Near Heights: <https://cpa.abc-zone.com/near-heights>
 - Southwest Mesa: <https://cpa.abc-zone.com/sw-mesa>
 - Richard M: How do you try to get input on bike/ped facilities?
 - Seth T: There are a few different ways. Conducted focus groups and in two of them were focused on transportation and urban design and open to the public to drop in on. There was also a pre-assessment survey in the Near Heights with a few hundred respondents. There were feature Southwest Mesa respondents, which is something to re-visit with the process. Transportation elements were included.
 - Richard M: Once the assessments are approved, how do you pass that information along? Does that go to DMD?
 - Seth T: I believe the next step is to go to EPC. I would need to look again to see if I am correct.
 - Richard M: Maybe at a future meeting you could share this.
- Bernalillo County (Julie L)



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- El Camino Real Historic Trail Study is now being developed into the 80% plan; completed public outreach and will be put out again for public comment
- Isleta Drain Master Plan is starting and will keep the group informed as we start doing more public outreach/ Have not reached the public outreach point yet.
- El Camino Real National Historic Trail – First round of public outreach completed and consultant working on an 80% draft. The 80% draft will be shared once completed.
- Bridge Blvd Reconstruction – Currently under construction. Project will include buffered bike lanes in project scope from intersection of Coors Blvd and Tower Rd, then along Tower Rd to the intersection of Tower Rd and Bridge Blvd. Finally along Bridge Blvd to just west of Goff Rd.
- Sunport Extension Project – Construction underway on Woodward Rd. Woodward Rd intersects William St. William St is a current bike route and proposed future bicycle boulevard. Bicycle boulevard striping now in place on William St from Cesar Chavez Blvd to Pacific Ave. DMD has expressed interest in resurfacing the southern portion of William St to where it meets Woodward Rd.
- Follow-up Sunport Extension Project to Transit St – COA Parks & Rec has provided concept drawings and general cost. Next BCPWD needs to see if this could become a COA project or a BC project.
- Follow-up Woodend Bridge over Riverside Drain near NHCC – COA Parks & Rec has provided structural drawings of great new bridges on N. Diversion Channel Trail. These have been shared with BC Operations & Maintenance (BC O&M). Need to follow up with BC O&M.
- MRCOG (Tara Cok)
 - Asked by GARTC to give a report about the multi-use trail usage for this year compared to next year and would be happy to give that presentation to this group in the future
 - Richard M: I would be interested. Even though we don't do trails, the trails often come in contact with on-street facilities and is always good to know what's happening.
- NMDOT District
 - Nothing to report

Public Comments

- Jamie J: 98th St and some of those intersections are incredibly dangerous with lots of congestion and the bike path that runs along the arroyos at about 45 degree angle is fantastic but weaves in and out of lots of traffic and intersections.
 - Richard M: Debbie will be coming back to talk about that at some point.

Meeting adjourned at 5:28 PM

Next Meeting: November 8, 4-6 PM